



Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids Applauds Hawaii's Gov. Lingle for Protesting RJR's Use of Hawaii's Name, Image to Market Cigarettes to Kids

7/29/2004 10:11:00 AM

To: State Desk

Contact: Jennifer Friedman of the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, 202-296-5469

WASHINGTON, July 29 /U.S. Newswire/ -- The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids applauds Hawaii Governor Linda Lingle for voicing strong opposition to a new pineapple and coconut flavored cigarette called "Kauai Kolada," manufactured by the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. (RJR). Governor Lingle rightly criticized RJR for using Hawaii's good name and image to market cigarettes to kids everywhere, and for "preying on our youth by enticing them with flavored cigarettes, and getting them addicted at a very young age." Governor Lingle categorized RJR's use of "the name of Kauai and Hawaii images to market cigarettes to young people" as "disgusting...and offensive to the people of our state."

"RJR's continued marketing campaigns clearly aimed at youth are the height of corporate irresponsibility and demonstrate blatant disregard for the health of America's children by bringing more addiction, disease and death," said Matthew L. Myers, president of the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. "By standing up to Big Tobacco, Governor Lingle has shown her commitment to protecting Hawaii's kids and helping to reduce tobacco's terrible toll."

RJR has a long and unrepentant history of marketing its tobacco products to kids. It was RJR that conducted the infamous "Joe Camel" marketing campaign that was responsible for getting millions of kids to try smoking for the first time. RJR stopped the Joe Camel campaign after the Federal Trade Commission took action against it, and the 1998 state tobacco settlement prohibited cartoon characters in cigarette ads. In June 2000, a California judge ordered RJR to change its ad-placement policies and pay a \$20 million penalty for breaching the tobacco settlement and "indirectly targeting" teenagers with magazine ads for Camel and other cigarettes.


The marketing of candy-flavored cigarettes, such as RJR's "Kauai Kolada" has been universally condemned by public health experts as being aimed at trying to get kids to experiment with smoking. The practice would be banned altogether under the terms of legislation recently passed by the U.S. Senate to give the U.S. Food and Drug Administration authority to regulate the tobacco industry. Likewise, RJR's continuing efforts to market products designed to appeal to youth would seem to bolster the assertions made by the U.S. Department of Justice in its \$280 billion lawsuit against the tobacco industry. The suit, which goes to trial in September, seeks to hold the tobacco industry legally accountable for decades of illegal and harmful practices, including marketing to children and concealing the health risks and addictiveness of its products.

<http://www.usnewswire.com/>

-0-

/© 2004 U.S. Newswire 202-347-2770/

© 2004 U.S. Newswire

A Division of  Medialink

